



## MEETING MINUTES / 19 SEPTEMBER 2017

### ATTENDANCE:

Present: Farley, Showell, Armbruster (telephone), Baldwin, Bradley, Johnson, Lardizzone, Lopez, Magner, Newstadt, Seppala, and Stewart **80%**

Absences: McMullen, Newman, and Sarg

Guests: Ginny Yelland (Wilmington VAMC), Bill Peterson (Delaware Veterans Home), Bob Corsa, and Liz Byers-Jiron

### CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS:

Requested moment of silence for hurricane victims and Marines injured at Camp Pendleton

Introduced new Commissioners Johnson, Lopez, and Stewart

Discussed how handout (homeless veterans) provided current statistics on Delaware's homeless veterans

### MEETING MINUTES:

Approved, motions: Lardizzone and Newstadt

### ADMINISTRATIVE REMARKS:

#### **Wilmington VAMC – Ginny Yelland, Public Affairs**

September is Suicide Prevention Month and Director Kane issued a "call to action"

- Everyone needs information to prevent veteran suicides
- Handed out prevention documents highlighting what to say to a suicidal member
- Suicide prevention declaration, to be signed
- Campaign name "Be There" for veterans in trouble

(Lopez) Is there a start date?

(Farley) Similar to homelessness initiative, many agencies work suicide prevention and within a month will organize to address issue. Goal is for all Commissioners to be involved

Sussex CBOC opened 12 September

Dover CBOC update

- Expedited request for expansion forwarded to VA for consideration

Tele-ICU, cameras at bedside, helps nurses and physicians communicate with Cincinnati VAMC

Tele-Health at DVH was tested and will soon be implemented

Flu shot schedule is out and immunizations are available throughout Delaware

Veteran Information Fair, 21 September / 1100 – 1500, Building 5, partnering with Paws 4 Pets

VSO meeting is moving toward working groups to address concerns

- Communication group, develop communication tool to educate veterans needing emergency room services
- Telephone group, review call center for better communication flow

(Newstadt) Do you expect an increase in personnel?

120 members have been hired to work at the medical center, benefits office, and CBOCs

Claim processing has improved and is expedited when all information is submitted

**Delaware Veterans Home (DVH) – Bill Peterson, Director:**

103 residents and entry applications are being review

Noted increase in suicides for 62 and older population, VA statistics indicate less than 10% of veterans

VA survey highlighted computer tracking failure and marked it as a “jeopardy” finding

- Issue was immediately corrected

- Back up system prevents resident escape from campus

Mold around dishwasher area is being assessed for an abatement plan

Tele-Health is running

Awaiting date for Gold suite opening

Snoezelin Room is a therapeutic environment used to deliver stimuli to dementia patients

- Will research for inclusion

- Possible funding through grant

Staffing concerns may arise from new Milford Hospital

- Better pay for nurses and nursing assistances

**Home of the Brave, Director Jessica Finan:**

Not present

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Baldwin

Discussed Carrier to Classroom book

- Noticed non-veteran teachers have classroom control issues

- Veteran succeed with classroom control

- With current teacher shortage, veterans are encouraged to become teachers

- Book sales will be donated to DVTF

Young entrepreneurs are leading fundraising efforts because donors are no longer donating as much

Liz Byers-Jiron

Delaware Stand Down is 22 September, opening ceremony is 0900

- Appreciates assistance from various agencies, 136 organizations are signed up to assist

- New venue, Schutte Park in Dover

- Flu shots and Give-A-Vet-A-Smile program will be on site

Dave Skocik

Watchmaker School ribbon cutting was 13 September, six students are enrolled

POW/MIA Highway ribbon cutting was 15 September

Gathering of Rustin Eagles (flew helicopters in Vietnam)

- Dinner 22 September and Ceremony 23 September

Urged Veteran Service Organizations to secure a DVTF Dinner table and/or host a fundraiser throughout the year

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Bear Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Armbruster:**

Interments – 82

**Millsboro Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Commissioner Bradley:**

Interments - 39

**Health and Human Services, Commissioner Sarg:**

Not present

**Legislative Affairs, Commissioner McMullen:**

Not present

**ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS:**

Commissioner McMullen (AFSA)

Not present

Commissioner Armbruster (AL)

National Convention, 18 – 24 August, Reno NV

- Elected first female commander, Denise Rohan

Nationally 16 American Legion supported resolutions went through

Heading to Indiana for Americanism training

University of Delaware is seeking campus improvements for veterans

Commissioner Bradley (AMVETS)

Welcomed commissioners to the post

Sussex County veterans are welcome to join American Veterans Post 2

Vietnam Veterans of America meeting is at the post today

Military Order of the Purple Heart, Sussex chapter, is trying to hold meetings at the post

Commissioner Lardizzone (DAV)

Attended Delaware National Guard Homecoming, POW/MIA ribbon cutting, and Cheer Center events

Outreach event, with Veteran Service Officers, in Camden 21 September and at Delaware Tech (Dover) 22

September, both times are 0800 - 1600

Commissioner Johnson (KWVA)

Cheer Center hosted Patriot's Day, school children and two WW II veterans were in attendance

Chapter 1 has Wounded Warrior Fund, donated to Home of the Brave and Spalding Center (Boston) for TBI research

Organization is working to pay for veteran transportation to various appointments

Commissioner Farley (MCL)

Preparing for Toys for Tots

Commissioner Sarg (MOAA)

Not present

Commissioner Magner (MOPH)

National Convention, 13 August, Dallas TX, new commander Neil Van Ess

Deputy Executive Meeting 23 September

Fundraiser for holiday food program 30 September

Commissioner Newman (VFW)

Not present

Commissioner Baldwin (VVA)

Various posts will sponsor DVTF Dinner seats

Barnes and Noble (Concord), then book fair book signing on 4 November

Fleet Reserve National Convention, 19 – 24 September, serving as Delaware's representative

Commissioner Showell (At Large)

Brigadier General Dave Fleming promoted to Assistant Adjutant General (Army)

Commissioner Newstadt (At Large)

Impressed by Veterans Mental Health Summit and disturbed by veteran suicide statistics

Jewish War Veterans hosted a female speaker who briefed Hawaiian demographics

Commissioner Seppala (At Large)

Attended Veterans Mental Health Summit

Commissioner Lopez (At Large)

Brain Injury Association of Delaware Crab fest, 23 September / 1600

Army Wounded Warrior and DELVETS Post 2 sponsored fundraisers for Southern Delaware Equestrian Programs (Horses and Vets)

Benevolent events for veterans in need are sponsoring families

Commissioner Stewart (At Large)

Law Enforcement / First Responders Luncheon, Camden-Wyoming Firehouse, 5 October / 1200 – 1600

- Donations support families of deceased law enforcement and first responders

#### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:**

DVTF: Requests 12, Granted 9 (75%), Awarded \$12,951.25 and Balance \$58,378.00

#### **TERM EXPIRATION:**

None

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

Chair and Vice Chair Nominations/Election (OPEN)

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

None

#### **ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION:**

None

#### **SPECIAL SESSION:**

No one, other than current Chair and Vice Chair, were nominated for office

Lardizzone made a motion for Farley to remain Chair, seconded by Stewart, unanimous vote for Farley

Lardizzone made a motion for Showell to remain Vice Chair, seconded by Baldwin, unanimous vote for Showell

Lardizzone made a motion to close nominations, seconded by Stewart

Newstadt made a motion to name Liz Byers-Jiron, Special Advisor to the Commission, unanimous vote for Byers Jiron

#### **NEXT MEETING:**

**Tuesday, 17 October 2017 at 10:00 AM**

#### **LOCATION:**

**Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs Conference Room**